Problems of Interim Rule

—Thomas J. Foley

THE

Commonweal

CIVIL LIBERTIES

BASTIONS OF FREEDOM

by Thomas E. Kennelly

The Failure of Collectivization

by Gunnar D. Kumlien

Rebirth of the Senses

by Ned O'Gorman

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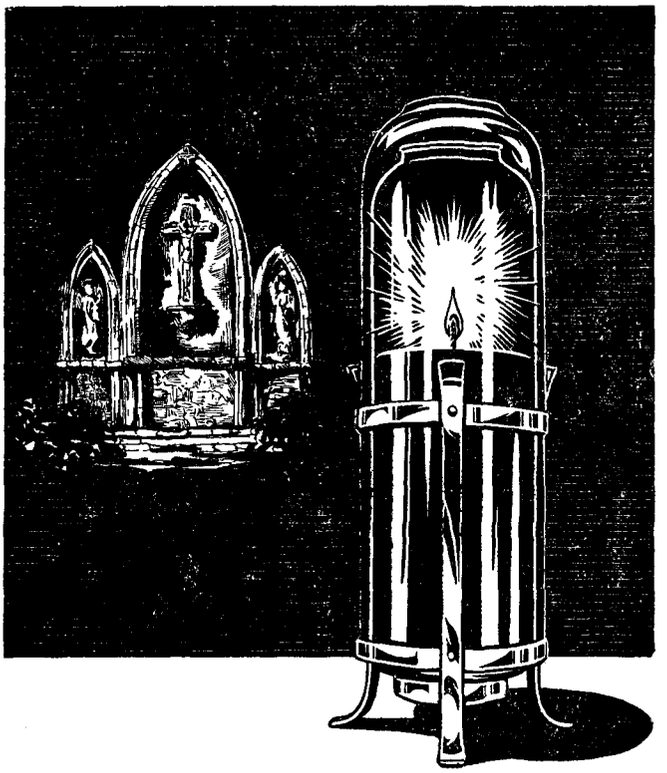

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The Commonweal

week by week

RELIGION ON CAMPUS

THE peoples of every country have always felt a deep concern for their younger and untested generation. In America this concern traditionally manifests itself at moments of patriotic élan, particularly at commencements. The youth of the country are told that they are not only the militant defenders of their country's present, but the shapers of what it will be. (The future lies, not in the lap of the gods, but in their hands.) These clichés, polished and refurbished for each occasion, remain in circulation because they derive from indisputable fact.

Nor is it accidental that these sentiments find their most common expression at commencement exercises, for our colleges and universities are to supply the leaders of tomorrow. The students of these institutions are supposedly alert to new ideas, attitudes, beliefs. Not yet confirmed in any mold, they are subject to many influences, free to choose and select. For them ideas are things to be tried and tested, discussed and discarded. They have only the invigorating knowledge of the present; unburdened by an experiential memory of the past they can deplore the failures, the stodginess, the unimaginative paths of their fathers. In their desire to make all things new they can revolt against the status quo.

This, at least, is the traditional view of college students, and it is parodoxical that many who, in the past, were troubled by the ease with which students dismissed the advice of their elders are now concerned because they so readily accept present conditions. For it is apparently true that on most campuses throughout the country there is little of the social and political ferment we have come to expect. Unless the unexpected occurs, the coming Presidential campaign will attract less attention among the students than did the '52 election. And the '52 election had less partisan interest than the election of '48. Social questions arouse interest, but there is little evidence of strong indignation in the face of inequities, little of that abrasive intolerance which is often short-sighted and irritating but which gets things done. The spirit of the modern campus comes not from a desire to revolt, but from a skepticism which fails to engender enthusiasm. And it is this spirit which has earned for today's students the epithet "young fogeys."

THE picture is not as bleak, however, as such judgments would make it seem. Students show an increasing interest in religion, an interest which is more than faddish and which is set apart from what is spurious in our present "religious revival." For their skepticism comes into play here and they have no desire for a religion that promises —as one student phrased it—"pie in the penthouse." They are not entranced by religion which is slickly packaged and enticingly wrapped. If they have become critical of a completely secular and materialistic humanism, they do not intend to succumb to what is only superficially attractive. The charges of "flight from reason" or "failure of nerve" are not to be leveled against them. In their search for the foundations of religious belief, they are applying the intellectual disciplines they have found useful in other pursuits.

What can be done by those who have a deep and abiding concern for these young people who wish to find in our present world a spiritual basis? That these students distrust the churches is clear from their failure to attend any particular church in spite of their real religious interest. They study Aquinas, Augustine and Calvin; they attempt to relate their new-found religious and theological knowledge with the concrete problems they have encountered in the modern world; they do not believe that man can solve all his problems alone or with the aid of science. But they do not attend the churches.

This is failure, and we must accept it as largely our responsibility. Catholics know well the tragedy of the nineteenth century when the Church lost so many because it failed to cope with complex prob-

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lems of that time. We still bear the legacy of the nineteenth century, but present-day failures are all our own. The students know why they do not attend church. "All my church does is give us a few parties and tell us to be good boys and think about God. Does this help solve the race question? Will it prevent World War III? Christianity has plenty of answers, good ones, but the people doing least about them are Christians."

These are terrible charges and not altogether true, but they have large elements of truth and they deserve to be answered. Catholics know that their Church embodies a system of unchangeable moral absolutes, but they know too that as individual Catholics they have often failed to implement them. They know that the Church is an ultimate guarantor of freedom, but they know too that individual Catholics have frequently aligned it with intolerant forces. Too often Catholics have failed to assert spiritual values when faced with the complexities of the socio-political world. By those things we have become known. Unless our life in the temporal order bears the imprint of our religious life we cannot expect those outside to know the Church as it is.

EAVESDROPPING ON JURORS

REACTION to the news that the deliberations of juries in Wichita, Kansas, had been microphoned and recorded was virtually all one way. The metropolitan press and representatives of all shades of the political spectrum vied with one another in expressing a sense of outrage. Few went farther than the American Civil Liberties Union, which emphasized the threat to rights guaranteed by the Sixth and Seventh Amendments, the importance of impartial juries and the juror's need of absolute protection. Attorney-General Brownell strenuously protested and promised to ask Congress to pass a law forbidding listening in on juries by anyone.

It is extremely reassuring that men of such varying political persuasions should be one in their concern to protect so basic an American institution. The very vehemence and extent of the indignation registered bear witness to the extent to which we cherish some of the pillars of our political democracy. This is even borne out in an oblique way by those publicists who took advantage of the outcry to get in some blows at such favorite whipping boys as the University of Chicago and the Ford Foundation.

What exactly was done out in Wichita to have caused all this outcry? Microphones were hidden behind the heating system in the jury room and a recording instrument set up in another room not far away. In six civil cases the jurors' conversation was recorded, played over and edited under the supervision of a University of Chicago sociologist.

The jurors themselves were unaware that anyone was listening in, but the judges and attorneys were and had acquiesced. In editing, great care was taken to eliminate jurors' names and any clues that might identify them. These six recordings comprise but a small part of a much more general and serious study of the workings of the American jury system financed by $1,400,000 of Ford Foundation funds and aimed at making that system a more effective instrument of justice. Another part of the project, for example, involved sending questionnaires to some fourteen hundred former jurors in six states.

In view of the sociologists' object and the precautions taken, it is doubtful whether any great crime was committed in Wichita by this one sampling. It is said, however, that one of the investigators (who did not prevail) wanted to collect data by this means from ten juries in every single state. Viewed as a foot in the door the Wichita jury-tap is something quite different; in this light no wonder it gave pause. Statistically, a few such conversations would carry little weight anyway; and widespread resort to listening in on juries (even when conducted in an impersonal manner, expertly and for a serious purpose) would seem to involve dangers that can hardly be ignored.

NEXT WEEK

RUSSELL KIRK discusses the present condition of serious journalism.

"Since the beginning of what Bagehot calls 'the Age of Discussion,' the whole tone of civilized life, and the fabric of political order, have been maintained in considerable part by the serious journals of opinion and criticism. These magazines, carrying on discussion of first principles and present issues among the educated and reflective people of every generation, have exerted a profound influence upon those persons who form popular opinion—newspaper editors, lawyers, clergymen, professors and teachers. . . . But these journals of opinion and criticism have fallen upon evil days, especially in the United States; they are decreasing in number and in influence; and if they succumb altogether, probably we will find ourselves ushered out of the Age of Discussion altogether, and thrust into some Age of Conditioned Responses."

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MacARTHUR AND YALTA

THE battle over Yalta has already gone on longer than World War II. So far there is nothing to indicate that an armistice is in sight, and this despite the recent release of official documents bearing on General MacArthur's views on Russian participation in the Japanese phase of the war.

In the recent skirmish, General MacArthur at first seemed to be coming off second-best, but, good military man that he is, this fact did not stop him. Gathering his strength, he soon carried out a diverting maneuver from his redoubt in the Waldorf-Astoria, and by now the reading public is probably as confused—or, perhaps, bored—as ever by the entire matter.

In this issue, much of the problem centers around the fact that General MacArthur is more than a general; he has also long served as a figurehead and rallying-point in right-wing Republican circles, and it was in keeping with this role that he hammered at Yalta. Last March, for example, he said: "Had my views been requested with reference to Yalta, I would most emphatically have recommended against bringing the Soviet into the Pacific war at that late date. To have made vital concessions for such a purpose would have seemed to me fantastic." Eventually, the controversy over such MacArthur statements led to Congressional pressure on the Pentagon for the release of pertinent documents. Since their publication, however, General MacArthur has continued to insist that he was correct, saying that the record only confirms the fact that he was not consulted about Yalta.

On this aspect of the matter, General MacArthur may be correct. Apparently he was not consulted about Yalta, but this is not the point. The point is that he did urgently favor bringing Russia into the war against Japan long before Yalta, and that after Yalta he regarded Russian intervention as a factor which would greatly lessen American casualties in an invasion of Japan. This estimate of the military situation, it should be noted, probably would have been proved correct by history if it had not been for the A-bomb, and General MacArthur should therefore feel under no necessity to apologize for or defend his views. But the problem is that the General must now play the impossible role in which his devoted followers have cast him—without, it must be said, much protest on his part—that of the man whose foresight is almost superhuman. And so it is not enough that General MacArthur could make a reasoned case for having held a particular position—as he could; instead he must be the one man who would have anticipated every turn and twist of history and hence avoided every problem which later arose to confront the Democratic Administration. The hero-figure must remain inviolate.

Thus the whole MacArthur-Yalta skirmish becomes a fruitless controversy. Entirely aside from the merits of the original debate over Yalta—the terms of which have long since been obscured by partisan controversy—the current flurry of activity along the Potomac and in New York simply illustrates again what all should know: the man with political inclinations who lacks 20/20 hindsight has not yet been born; what is not so easy is finding those whose foresight even remotely approaches that standard.

SUBVERSION IN THE SOUTH?

THE conviction that in the case of Emmett Till American justice closed racist eyes to let murderers go free is widespread in Europe and Asia—so much so that in some places the case seems to have obscured completely the historic Supreme Court decision against segregation. Yet while editors abroad were still commenting on the Till case, the Attorney General of Georgia was busy, too, seeking to have the Association for the Advancement of Colored People outlawed in his state. "The issue involved," he charged, "is not one of race but of subversion." The activities of the NAACP, he said, "and its local fronts pose a serious threat to the peace, tranquillity, government, and way of life of our state."

After the Georgia Attorney General's remarks were reported, Roy Wilkins, executive secretary of the NAACP, defended the organization; he pointed out that no government body or official, from the House Un-American Activities Committee to the Attorney General of the U.S., had ever suggested that the NAACP was in any way connected with Communism or subversion in any form. In so far as Georgia is determined to make segregation a keystone of its way of life, despite the Constitution and the Supreme Court, the NAACP is undoubtedly "subversive" of Georgia's institutions. But to say it is subversive in any serious meaning of the word is nonsense.

In making this prompt answer to the charge of Communism and subversion Mr. Wilkins was undoubtedly correct; such charges must be dealt with promptly, however obviously false they are. But it is nonetheless painful to admit that such a reply was necessary. In cases like this, surely, the American people know who is really subverting the America idea. It is not the NAACP.

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THE UNPREDICTABLES

A RECENT report from London indicates one source of hope that we of the West should both recognize and hold to. Red China, it was reported, looked both sullenly and quizzically at the Soviet agreement to send arms to Egypt. The Chinese Communists were said to have a double-barreled question to ask the Kremlin: "If arms are so plentiful, why have we not received more of them; and why is Egypt paying less for these plentiful arms than we are?"

It would be naive to say that Communist China's resentment of the arms-to-Egypt deal really represents a crack in the Iron Curtain. But it might be equally naive to brush the incident aside as inconsequential. From this, or some similar "small" incident, may come a chain of events which will give the West the luxury of an *unguarded* optimism.

We can never be too sure of what waits around the next corner of history. Unexpected events, often trivial in themselves, are frequently capable of shifting the course of history. They evade the most careful plans of policy makers, and are never parts of even the most calculated risk. They are what Hanson Baldwin once called "the intangibles of history," and a glance at history shows how important they can be: an assassin's bullet at Sarajevo or Hitler's miscalculation of the Russian winter.

Red China's resentment of arms shipments to Egypt may be such an "intangible," or it may not. At any rate, it serves to remind us that even the best-laid plans of the Kremlin may some day go awry.

CHALLENGE TO CATHOLICS

AMERICAN Education Week will be observed from November 6-12. Catholic schools will, of course, join in the observance and have been asked to center Catholic Education Week on the theme: the Contribution of the Catholic School to American Life.

Discussion of this theme should invite Catholics to make better known to their non-Catholic neighbors the solid achievements of Catholic education, and to stress its value to our pluralistic society. Of its nature Catholic education is neither "divisive" nor "un-American," as some of its critics have maintained. It is, rather, a valuable witness to the religious and cultural diversity which forms part of our national strength.

But in considering the contribution of Catholic education to American life, we should also do some stock-taking and soul-searching. We should be concerned, for example, with one contribution we have not made: we have not contributed our quota of intellectual leaders to American life.

In the current issue of *Thought*, the Fordham University quarterly, Father John Tracy Ellis of the Catholic University offers a trenchant analysis of this partial failure of American Catholic education. As an historian, he is aware of the concrete circumstances which help explain the limited role of the Catholic intellectual; as a scholar, he is aware that these historical circumstances do not fully absolve Catholic educators from blame, nor justify the attitude of many Catholics—at once suspicious and condescending—toward those who are dedicated to ideas.

In Father Ellis' view, the impoverishment of American Catholic scholarship and the low level of Catholic leadership in most areas of our national life are due primarily to Catholic educators themselves. Their "frequently self-imposed ghetto mentality" keeps them from fruitful communion with their non-Catholic colleagues, and they have not lived up to "their responsibilities to the incomparable tradition of Catholic learning."

A paradox may lie beyond this strong indictment made by Father Ellis. Catholic education may have failed to make major contributions to the intellectual life of America because it has spent too much time and effort in trying to be "American," and to assume the coloration (protective?) of the American educational scene. We have imitated, to a dangerous degree, too many of the worst features of American education—vocationalism, anti-intellectualism, endless educational experimentation. As a result, Catholic educators have often spread their time and budgets too thin to permit distinguished work in the very fields where America looks for the unique contributions of Catholic thought—theology, philosophy, the humanities. It is a distressing and significant fact that Catholics have contributed substantial leadership to only one area of national life; that area, ironically enough, is business.

There is good reason to believe that the currents of American thought are moving away from a moribund materialism to a view of life which seeks values that are truly and fully human. The contemporary concern with the basis and scope of liberty, with the nature of private and public morality, and with religion itself, highlights those areas wherein American Catholic intellectuals might be expected to make a contribution to American life which is, to a degree, uniquely theirs. Catholic Education Week is a good time to measure our capacity and willingness to make this contribution.

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Bastions of Freedom

"THE PRESENT DANGER TO CIVIL LIBERTIES LIES NOT SO MUCH IN PUBLIC APATHY AS IN A FUNDAMENTAL BLINDNESS"

THOMAS E. KENNELLY

TO suggest there is some apathy about civil liberties in this country is to bang on an open door, but if there are any lingering doubts about it the study by Samuel A. Stouffer and his associates should remove them. Written under a grant from the Fund for the Republic, *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties* purports to "open a window into the mind of America." That it does nothing of the kind is beside the point. It is the negative results which are interesting.

The survey was made in May, June, and July, 1954 during the Army-McCarthy hearings when presumably the mind of America was saturated with an intimate picture of "government" in action. Time and production costs to televise the hearings amounted to $10,763,000. ABC-TV and Du Mont TV presented approximately 186½ hours of live coverage which was fed to 81 affiliated stations. Both networks carried the hearings in their entirety.

And what was the impact of this spectacle upon the public? Were we fearful with counsel for the Army, kindly Mr. Welch, that the sun might go down and we trembling in our beds before Senator McCarthy placed the list of security risks at Fort Momouth safely in the hands of the F.B.I.? Were we dashing off notes to friends in government service pleading with them to rifle the files for evidence of misconduct so not to frustrate the Senator? Were we brooding over the New York *Times'* box-score of charges and counter-charges trying to find some relevance to the day's testimony?

We were doing nothing of the sort. Most of us were busy, busy, busy with important problems: scratching our heads over last month's past due payments on our charge accounts and deciding whether to smoke filtered cigarettes or to take a chance; we were fighting with our wives, cursing the child psychologists, and spanking our small daughters. Less than one per cent of us were worried about either the Communist threat or our civil liberties.

But apathy about civil liberties is not peculiarly an American phenomenon although it has become fashionable now to think so. Mr. J. B. Priestley in the *New Statesman and Nation* charts a similar failing in England: a growing "Americanization" of outlook characterized by talk about traditions "even if those traditions no longer have any inner validity and force and are in fact only part of the great show that amuses the idle-minded mob." England, too, has politicians "who praise the love of liberty of people who would cheerfully exchange their last glimpse of freedom for a new car, a refrigerator and a fourteen-inch television screen."

Substitute a twenty-one-inch screen for the fourteen, a deep freeze for the refrigerator and the exchange might not prove unattractive in the United States. We might swap our liberty for gadgets not because we dislike it, but because the bargain could be completed before we knew what had happened.

IT is a commonplace that the slogans of free men, such as "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," have, in the abstract, a magical quality which serves equally well to enslave the human spirit as to liberate it. Everyone is familiar with George Orwell's deadly distortion, "All pigs are equal but some pigs are more equal than others," and everyone has some knowledge of the "democracy" guaranteed in the several "People's Republics" which has made Orwell's fiction not so much a satire as a prophecy. But the confusion of the form for the substance of liberty, so obvious on the grand scale of pigs and republics, becomes subtler as we approach our personal shibboleths. And the point is reached, finally, where the naked will in all its subjective prejudices becomes indistinguishable from the abstract principle, and it seems that whosoever violates our will does not merely offend us, but violates the substance of liberty itself.

For this reason alone, perhaps a certain apathy about civil liberties is not such a bad thing after all. A general politicization of society would end in nothing short of disaster. For is not the essence of politics the struggle for power and the authority to

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legitimize it? The great conservative Edmund Burke warned against too close an inquiry into the foundations of government providing there existed general happiness and content. His caution includes a warning against too intense preoccupation with the nature and limits of one's liberty under the law.

Here in the United States we have agreed to leave the most important questions open. Our differences are accommodated within a climate of restraint and moderation. Since individually we lack the strength to impose a state which establishes the truth apparent to us, we rest fairly secure in the knowledge that no other person or group can legitimately impose his personal state and established truths upon us. Our ideology, if it can be so described, consists in our determination to maintain an atmosphere of toleration so that the question of truth shall remain open, so that each person shall be permitted to pursue his destiny according to conscience limited only by every other person's right to do likewise. In short, we agree that my right to swing my fists ends exactly where my neighbor's nose begins.

Thus it would seem that the present danger to civil liberties lies not so much in public apathy as in a fundamental blindness. There is something provincial in our pluralistic society which produces a tendency among us to identify liberty with "liberties" which we approve, and "license" with the activities of our non-conformist neighbors. We look upon our particular exercise of free speech, freedom of religion, freedom of association, and the like, as somehow definitive of the whole class of freedoms, and inalienable because legitimized by the authority of a certain church, or social class, or by the prevailing mood of popular opinion. We do not see any connection between the need for tolerating ideas which we loathe and the free exercise of our own civil liberties.

Shortsightedness, excusable in society at large, is hard to account for when found in the educated minority whose function it is to inform public opinion. It is particularly galling to find it in some sections of the American Catholic community. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, for instance, has advocated the radical theory that a man who does not recognize his constitutional duties surrenders his constitutional rights—a doctrine, needless to say, directly contrary to Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence.

The dangers involved in such a trend are perhaps best illustrated by recalling Italy under Fascism. Although the Italian constitution defined individual rights, every one of them was subject to legislative infringement. When Mussolini's government proceeded to limit the press and any personal or property rights it chose "in the interest of public order," it was restrained by no constitutional bounds. The Italian citizen's obligations to the state were amorphous, mystical, and total; his rights were conditional, gratuitous, and revocable. Thus Silone on Italy: "The Land of Propaganda is built on unanimity. If one man says, 'No,' the spell is broken and public order is endangered. The rebel voice must be stifled."

Happily, unanimity is not compelled in the United States. Our government of limited powers allows space for the solitary citizen to say, "No." And no man is obligated to give up his constitutional rights unless a national emergency of such proportions arises that the existence of the state itself is at stake. Every American schoolboy has been taught the basic premise of our society that the state exists for the individual and not the other way round.

IN an open society citizens render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. Often the two orders of things coincide, sometimes they do not. When they conflict, the citizen can take his case to the courts for exemption from the legal obligation, as does the conscientious objector. By refusing to fulfill his constitutional duty the CO does not thereby "surrender his constitutional rights." On the contrary, he exercises his legal rights under the First Amendment to avoid violating what he conceives to be his moral obligation. The idle mob may howl at the sight of a man saying, "No," to military service, but the courts honor his scruples under the law.

Similarly, there are legal rights available to us as citizens which we renounce as Catholics. Under the civil law we can purchase contraceptives, divorce our wives, become sterilized, if we choose, and teach atheism; our moral obligations prevent us from doing any of these things. Although we deplore the beliefs of our neighbor which lead him to engage in these and similar activities, as citizens we are obliged to respect his right to them under the law. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" was the reply of Christianity to those who would like to make private affairs public ones. Paradoxically, however, it is we, witnesses to the Incarnation and the dignity of the human spirit, who often unite expediently with those whose purpose it is to dilute freedom. We should not be surprised that our own gardens are not cultivated when we spend so much time watching the neighbor's plot, DDT in hand ready to exterminate exotic growths. No doubt such growths are sometimes poisonous, but the exterminators are legion and the cultivators few.

Although some commentators would have it so, freedom is not yet limited to a choice between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. A wide area remains open within which we are free to develop a sense

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of moral responsibility. Whether or not we have sufficient interest or courage to exercise our freedom within this area is another question. Lamentably, it appears that most of us do not. Moreover, we regard the man who does with a sort of horrified awe: the accidental victim upon whose face the door closes never to be seen again by the luckier passengers.

It is quite easy to ride along with the crowd, or, alternatively, to withdraw from the game completely because politics has become too corrupt for our taste. But the sad truth of the matter is we are involved in a game from which there is no exit; it is either government by the people, or it is a fraud. We cannot get out and expect at the same time to keep our liberties. When Adlai Stevenson repeated Aristotle's observation that democracy is the most difficult of all forms of government, we received it with smug satisfaction as a tribute to our genius rather than as the honest warning it was intended to be. Nor is our task now made easier when, sheep-like, we follow special pleaders, or when leaders who possess competence in religious or scientific affairs

use their positions to legitimize certain political views which properly ought not to weigh more nor less than those of other interested citizens.

In many Catholic circles, when civil liberties are discussed at all it is usually with a view toward further curtailment except, perhaps, where religious education in the schools is the issue. And many Catholic journals report every tightening of state censorship law as a victory against the forces of evil; no comment whatever is devoted to the effect on the ecology of freedom. Sometimes, when it is convenient, appeal is made to the inalienable rights propounded by the Founding Fathers, but what this has to do with the exercise of liberty I am not sure. One listens in vain for the prudential voice questioning the wisdom or propriety of delegating to the government the authority to decide what is good for us to read, to hear, or to view. There is no intelligent discussion of the limits of free speech in a community of mature citizens, nor of the positive value of unfettered discourse for the development of morally responsible persons. And any occasional voice raised in protest against a particularly flagrant abuse of privilege, such as Senator McCarthy's treatment of witnesses before his Committee, is either ignored or drowned out in a torrent of denunciation.

How can we explain the indifference, the latent hostility toward freedom which permits us to use it for our own purposes when convenient and then turn aside when our neighbor's rights are jeopardized? Is it because we possess the truth and he does not? Is it based upon the belief that in practical affairs there exists an attainable condition of things called 'truth," and that freedom it justified only to the degree that reasonable argument is directed toward discovering it? If this is the rationale it is mighty thin stuff, for once "truth" is discovered there remains no basis for further argument, and the truth seeker unprotected from delusion confuses "truth" with the *status quo*.

THE limits of freedom in a liberal democracy have little to do with truth or error, but they have something to do with peace and tranquility. When voices become strident in passionate partisanship, the possibility of genuine conversation diminishes; when open warfare carries the day, free speech disappears altogether.

We Americans are a people with opinions, used to talking freely about a variety of subjects. Much of what we say is trivial and of no value to anyone. Nevertheless the fact of conversation is a minimum condition for the cultivation of the good life for whose sake the intolerable demands of the community are endured. Who among us has the temerity to decide arbitrarily that the conversation has continued long enough? Any one of us can choose silence for himself without doing violence to liberty or to conscience, but who among us has the wisdom to perform this function for his neighbor? If it is a question of preserving the peace threatened by internal subversion, the community has a right to protect itself and to take the necessary steps to insure security. But if we consent to the narrowing of our liberties for reasons of security it is with the understanding that we do so only for the purpose of restoring the conditions of peace necessary for the continuation of conversation. The occasion should not be used to subvert freedom.

Short cuts to justice often end in blind alleys. If we join the mob shouting down liberty, we can expect a reversal one day that will find us fleeing down a Kafkaesque street with a different mob dogging our heels. If we snipe at the Bill of Rights because we fear Communists, we will find our voices muted when the time comes for us to say, "No." There is justification for the warning that today's orthodoxy might well be tomorrow's heresy, "when awful darkness and silence reign."

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The Failure of Collectivization

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

WILL Yugoslavia, now fully rehabilitated as a "People's Democracy," point the way for other Communist countries? Yugoslavia as a bellwether contrasts strongly with its heretical status of a few years ago. This is the impression one gets when visiting the Polish countryside now, with its few "kolkhozes" or collective farms, and its "kulaks" or independent farmers tilling their own land, more numerous and more attached to this land than ever.

This is one of the strange results the Communist land reform has led to, against the will of its authors. Instead of killing it has fostered "primitive rural Capitalism"—the most dangerous of all forms of Capitalism, according to Lenin. In Yugoslavia not only has all collectivization on the land stopped, but collective farms of different types have been dissolved and retransformed into private property, so disastrous were the results of forcing the farmers to join the collective farms. Poland and the other Communist countries may follow the same path.

Before the war about sixty per cent of Polish farms belonged to small farmers; the remaining land was made up of "estates" ranging in size from the 400,000 acres of Prince Radziwill to the sizable farms owned by well-to-do city dwellers and cultivated by tenants. The small farmers were often so debt-ridden that they could hardly be considered the real owners of their land. The first phase of the Communist land reform effected the wholesale cancellation of debts, and thus made the indebted farmers once again the owners of their small plots. Further, the estates were seized and parceled out to peasants who lacked sufficient land for their needs. This first part of the Communist land reform was naturally accepted with pleasure by the farmers.

The difficulties started in Poland, as in the other satellites, when the second phase of the Communist land reform began: mobilizing the farmers for the collective farms. The resistance to this collectivization in all Communist countries has been fierce, in spite of exorbitant taxes, drastic fines and delivery of most of the farm products to the State, sometimes below what they have cost. In all Communist countries this second part of the land program has been accomplished by more or less brutality, and has always splintered against the resistance of the farmers struggling desperately to save what they think life is worth living for—their individual property and a minimum of private enterprise.

In Yugoslavia the farmers hanged themselves rather than join the collectives, and in Poland, where in many respects the Communist regime has been and still is more moderate than in Yugoslavia, it was discovered very early that collectivization invariably led to a disastrous drop in farm production. Now collectivization has practically stopped altogether. The new strategy is: concentrate on the already existing collectives, try to improve them, and find out why production is so low. The result is that not more than twenty per cent of the cultivated soil in Poland is now collectivized, and of this only one-half is actually state-owned or nationalized.

THIS means eighty per cent of the soil is in the hands of the farmers, as compared with the ratio of sixty per cent before the war. The farmers are not only more numerous, but they have even a stronger position than before the war, in spite of the fact that they are still exploited by the State. The amazing thing is that some of them are actually big farmers, kulaks, in the traditional sense of the word; their large farms are situated principally on the ex-German territory in the Western part of Poland and in the rich agricultural zone round Poznan. The kulaks have never been actually persecuted in Poland. Even if their life is extremely difficult, the difference in that respect between Poland and the other Communist countries, including Yugoslavia, is great; it is greatest when compared with Soviet Russia, where the kulaks, as is well known, were exterminated and deported by the millions for the crime of being big farmers.

I have discussed these problems at length with Communist agricultural planners in Yugoslavia as well as in Poland. The Polish Communists recognize that big farms are a "very dangerous neighborhood" for collective farms, because they are an example of "lingering Capitalism." The Communists recognize

Mr. Kumlien, The Commonweal's correspondent in Rome, recently arrived in the United States for a series of lectures.

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that these farmers produce more with less manpower than do the collectives, but according to their view this is only because the collectives are not yet sufficiently organized. At the same time there is a sort of natural selection among the private farmers, so that those who are physically weaker, older, backward, or just not crafty enough to defend themselves against the merciless exploitation of the State, join the collectives out of sheer desperation or even indolence. The others are compelled, according to the law of the survival of the fittest, to become more and more crafty, hardworking, keen, modernized, productive, and even cunning, to withstand the pressure. Some of the Polish Communists have recognized that many of these big farmers are among the toughest types they have ever encountered.

Thus, through a sort of biological selection, the private farmers in Poland tend to become masters of passive resistance, and more "capitalist minded," to use the Communist word, than they have ever

been before. At the same time, the collectives tend to become receptacles for the less able of the rural population. A clear opposition between the two classes has already arisen, and the envious workers on the collectives call the private farmers kulaks, enemies of the people, and capitalist agents. The private farmers retaliate with jokes about how old people, drunkards, and good-for-nothings join the collectives in order to work as little as possible; some of these jokes have the indescribable flavor of old popular tales from the Slav countryside.

IN practice, the Communist land reform in Poland has led to that precise brand of capitalism which from a Communist point of view is most dangerous; "primitive rural capitalism" has become stronger than ever. Feudal Poland crumpled under the Communist blows, but the healthy capitalism lying underneath, small private property and small private enterprise, has been fortified by the ordeal. With capitalism as with the Church, strength has grown through trial. Lenin used to warn against this "primitive rural capitalism" of small private farms which, according to him, will inevitably breed more capitalism—this "breeding layer" therefore, has to be weeded out if the capitalist system is not to win in the long run. It was for this reason that in Russia, after the revolution of October, the soil was ruthlessly taken over by the State and nationalized and that the kulaks, the bigger farmers, were exterminated. In the countries which have become Communist after the war, it has not been considered advisable to go that far. Paradoxically, this comparative restraint has produced what the Communists tried to eradicate.

The Communists are well aware of this, not only in Yugoslavia and in Poland, but in other Communist countries as well, and when I talked with them, they did not conceal their concern. Naturally it is understood among them that the collectivization has to continue and shall continue, if capitalism is not to get its revenge. But in practice there is an unavoidable dilemma: first, collectivization can never be voluntary, but will always be more or less brutally compulsory; secondly, the farmers invariably react unfavorably to the drop in production. It is a great risk to postpone all further collectivization to some future date, as is done in most Communist countries today, because resistance to it hardens more and more. It is obvious, particularly in the case of Poland, that the longer it is postponed, the more difficult it will be. Or, as somebody I met in Poland said, the fault is found, not in the kulaks, but in the collective sabotage by human nature of the Communist Utopia of the agricultural planners. They could take over the land, but could not change the men upon it.

The strange thing is that these eighty per cent of private farmers who are so fed up with the State exploitation that they vent their rage even in front of strangers, particularly if they have had a glass of vodka—that these farmers approve of the confiscation and the division of big estates by the Communists and even of the confiscation of the two or three little farms belonging to well-to-do city dwellers. Even the most rabidly anti-Communist farmers generally follow that line. They think that only those who work on the land ought to possess it, and they bitterly criticize the old Polish landed gentry, now mostly in exile in the West.

All of this has some connection with the reply I got in Poland to a most difficult question which I put to the most different people, when I could presume that they had confidence enough to be sincere. The replies were always surprisingly similar. The question was: if there could be completely free political elections in Poland, how many would still vote for the Communists? And the reply was: at most one-fifth of the voters. One-fifth—that is the meager harvest of the Communist farm policy.

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Problems of Interim Rule

READING the newspapers these days, you get the idea that the government is operating like a well-oiled engine that never backfires, never chokes, never sputters and never stalls—even without the driver. Well, that is true only in a way. The car has been going along smoothly, no doubt about that. But only because there have not been any roadblocks, bumps or curves in the way. The greatest calculated risk of the decade has been successful, so far at least, because the committee that took over when Mr. Eisenhower was stricken has been lucky. However, this luck is not likely to continue much longer.

The half-hour and forty-minute conferences on the eighth floor of Fitzsimons army hospital are not enough. The best the President can get—and should get for now—is a dressed-up, rosy-looking capsule summary of what's going on in a particular field. Thus President Eisenhower could not reasonably be expected to get a true picture of the nation's economy—one that included the sharp break in the stock market, for instance—during the twenty minutes or so he listened to Treasury Secretary Humphrey recently. Nor could he be brought up to date on the North African and Middle Eastern crises or the disarmament bog-down in the half hour he spent with Secretary of State Dulles.

Meanwhile, government policy on these matters must remain static—a highly dangerous and unhealthy state these days—until the President has spent a few weeks on his Gettysburg farm regaining his strength. And it will be the first of the year, probably, before he can sit down and thrash out the problems of the world with his cabinet and the national security council, as he used to do.

Happily, the affairs of the nation and world during this interim period were such that the President's brain has not been absolutely needed. The time is rapidly approaching, however, when that brain will be indispensable. Here are some of the reasons why.

Biggest domestic problem is the budget. Now is the time that government agencies are figuring how much money they'll ask Congress to give them to spend during the twelve months beginning next July 1. The cabinet's strong man, George Humphrey, with the aid of Budget Director Rowland R. Hughes, is trying to keep expenses as low as possible to justify a tax cut next year. Humphrey's big headache is the Pentagon. That is where most of the money is spent, and it's also the place where it's most dangerous to cut budgets. Not only that, but the rivalry among the three services to outdo each other in developing a strong fighting force doesn't help matters any. Charles Wilson will do his best to settle the problem within the confines of the Pentagon, but his plan may not satisfy Mr. Humphrey. The President must make the final decision.

Ezra Benson says the cabinet is one hundred per cent behind his farm program. That may be true for the cabinet. But Republican politicians, both in Congress and in the organization throughout the country, indicate they'd like something different. Basic Republican strength is in the Midwestern farm belt. In 1948 dissatisfaction with the GOP farm program gave Harry Truman an issue and the margin he needed to defeat Dewey. Midwestern Republicans have not forgotten this, and they fear the farmers have not forgotten Mr. Eisenhower's implied promise in 1952 to support farm prices at one hundred per cent of parity. Here, too, the President must decide.

Those are only two of the domestic issues that must be worked out before Congress comes back in January. When he delivers the State of the Union message, or someone delivers it for him as the case may necessarily be, the President also must fix U.S. policy on several international issues. How lightly can the admittedly-temporary French exodus from the UN General Assembly be taken? How much backing can we give France in its colonial troubles in Algeria and Morocco? How can we stop the Communist-inspired arms race between Israel and the Arab states? Should we discourage our allies from accepting the tantalizing trade offers being dangled before them from behind the Iron Curtain? Is the U.S. willing to give up anything to gain Russian approval of a reunified Germany? Are we really willing to disarm? Can we put any trust at all in the Russian bear's grin? Basically, what, if anything, is the U.S. going to do to move from a Cold War to a Cold Peace, as it is being called here?

These are tough problems. It takes no seer to realize that each of these issues demands hours and hours of discussion and even more of concentrated thought, weighing one side against the other to achieve an inevitably delicate balance that will best serve our interests and prevent a nuclear war. The U.S. position on any one of them can mean the difference between peace and war. Nobody knows this better than the leaders in Washington who are waiting for Ike to come back.

THOMAS J. FOLEY.

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THE STAGE

"I WANT MY CATHARSIS!"

THE first of Mr. Arthur Miller's new plays is so uninterruptedly bad, and the second—though relieved occasionally with the note of pathos—so indisputably very little better, that one is moved by the occasion in which they are joined, "A View From the Bridge" (*at the Coronet*), alternately to ridicule and to grief. Everything that is specious and fraudulent in the American theater of serious intent seems to me concentrated in these two dramas of working-class life—one with its quivering nullity, the other with its rasping tragic pretension. In "A Memory of Two Mondays," Mr. Miller weaves a shapeless remnant of social protest on the loom of Mr. William Saroyan; its threads—which begin nowhere and arrive precisely at nothing—snarl intermittently into familiar caricatures of personality: the intellectual office boy (when will he finish *War and Peace,* and why is he reading it?); the fretful superintendent, the lecherous shipping clerks, etc. There is also an Irishman, God save the mark, not bred on land or sea since the time of Dion Boucicault. "A Memory of Two Mondays" is played in that style of boozy lyricism, punctuated by nervous obscenity, which represents the American imagination at its least appealing. Indeed, nothing said on the stage seemed to me quite so pertinent as the comment of my neighbor, a distinguished old gentleman obviously pried with difficulty from his postprandial pleasures at the University Club, who observed with rheumy and meditative authority at one notably nil point in the evening: "I wonder what made the fellow write this."

What, too, can have prompted Mr. Miller to write "A View From the Bridge"? Supreme playwright of domestic horror that he is—the terrible clangor of family dispute in "Death of a Salesman" still rings in my mind—he might be expected in this second play on a domestic theme to reveal some flicker and gleam of the old, ruddy, wrathful power. And "A View From the Bridge" has concentration, together with a certain dim moral presence: its grotesque images of desperation move occasionally out of chaos into an intelligible pattern of feeling. Yet not all the pressure of Mr. Miller's will can make us believe this to be more than a shabby and indefensible piece of work, overwrought and mindless, and ultimately intolerable in its pushing dramatic aspiration.

"A View From the Bridge" looks out on the Brooklyn waterfront, and the Italian-American laborers who inhabit it: the play relates the consequences of a longshoreman's inadmissible and illicit (almost incestuous) desire for a girl he has raised from childhood. Mr. Miller has sought to anchor this *fait divers* in the ancient earth of passionate Mediterranean myth: the demonic Princess of Colchis and bloody Agamemnon, he would have it, brooded at the birth of his brutish and howling protagonist. This is, of course, the most arrant kind of impertinence, and to adapt the celebrated phrase used by D. H. Lawrence in quite another connection, Mr. Miller seems to be suffering from rather a bad attack of tragedy in the head.

It is no longer permissible to make judgments in terms of class, yet what must be said of "A View From the Bridge" is that it consistently attempts to live above its emotional and intellectual station. Undoubtedly, there are tragedies of working-class life—of "the man with the dinner pail," as Edith Wharton characteristically called him: Mr. Miller's own "Death of a Salesman" stands as the classic exemplar in our drama. Yet any tragedy, whatever its time or setting or personages or theme, must rest on a finely structured articulation of pain, and a language—formal or colloquial, rigid or loose, bone-dry or fecund with imagery—sufficiently flexible to register the shocks of personality and fate. Mr. Miller may consider muttering across the spaghetti sauce (his play, in the last analysis, comes to nothing more) to be the 'objective correlative' of our time's capacity for communication, yet surely he must realize that to work within the accepted limitations of that idiom is simply to nullify even the possibility of a drama of poetic intensities.

Worse still is Mr. Miller's disposition of the pain which throbs sorely at the center of his play. We may concede to the contemporary playwright (or novelist) his privilege to write of disease and mutilation: we are free to insist only that the display not be gratuitous, nor the wounds exposed as badges of the writer's superior sensibility. For disease and mutilation, as Mr. Lionel Trilling has written in his essay *Art and Neurosis,* are available to us all: "life provides them with prodigal generosity. What marks the artist is his power to shape the material of pain we all have." It is precisely this kind of shaping or transmutation which does not seem to interest Mr. Miller: he wants the thing itself, suffering, indiscriminate and brutalizing. There is at the heart of "A View From the Bridge" no principle of order, no harmonious point: only a flux of pain washing intolerably over the intellect and the senses.

In his characteristic attitudes and concerns, Mr. Miller is at one with the audiences who have come to gape and to thrill at his willed melodrama of sensation. He shares their confusion of sentiments with ideas, and their ultimate interest not in art, but in a very limited kind of 'life.' He reinforces, too, with this play, that obsessive preoccupation with factual 'reality' (unmodified by spirit, unmediated by mind) which is driving American art into nullity and perversion. I have nothing to say about the performance of "A View

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From the Bridge": it is full of a special and particular kind of badness which has its roots in the text, and it shows again how dearly Mr. Miller is paying the aesthetic price for his political disavowal of Mr. Elia Kazan.

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

LOOK MA, NO CINEMASCOPE, NO COLOR

AMONG the many outstanding things about "Trial," one of the most hard-hitting anti-Communist films to come out of Hollywood, is that it dares to admit that everything is not perfect in these United States. There is a near-lynching scene, in which a bigoted mob is stopped from dragging the accused Mexican youth out of jail through reasons of economics rather than justice, and it is by no means pretty. And the end of the trial itself, which comes so close to being a travesty on justice (and is indeed unfair to the boy whose guilt as far as we know is dubious) sends one away thinking. It takes a good picture to do that, and "Trial" is a good picture in many respects.

In the first place, Don M. Mankiewicz has written a literate and lively script from his own novel, and Mark Robson has directed his cast so well that the movie has suspense and entertainment as well as something to think about. The story pits an idealistic but inexperienced lawyer (effectively played by Glenn Ford) against the very clever head of his law office (Arthur Kennedy in a brilliant performance) who also has ideals—ideals represented by the Communist party. When Ford, at a New York rally to save Angel Chavez (Rafael Campos), discovers that Kennedy and the movement behind the rally are Communist, the result is one of the most stirring scenes to turn up in a movie in years, with its powerful blast directed against both rabble rousers and their easily-led audiences. Afterward, Ford returns to the trial in Jan Juno (the state is not named) in anger and disgust, and he realizes he must work even harder than he has worked before to save Angel Chavez from the death penalty.

"Trial" by no means takes the easy way out of its complicated, perhaps too complicated, problems; but because its large cast includes Dorothy McGuire as an ex-fellow-traveler who is now in love with Ford, Juano Hernandez as the calm Negro judge who bends over backwards to be fair and firm with both sides, Katy Jurado as the accused boy's mother who really believes that Kennedy and his group are going to help her son, John Hodiak as the district attorney who emphasizes that he is native-born, white and Protestant, the whole picture has an atmosphere of authenticity and confusion as real as life. As a movie "Trial" is never dull, and Charles Schnee's first-rate production with its effective black-and-white photography proves again that the foremost consideration of a film is not the size of the screen nor the elaborate color, although these have their merits, but what it has to say.

THE English in their first attempt at making a film in wide-screen CinemaScope illustrate this point very well. Producer-director Anatole Litvak has taken Terence Rattigan's play, "The Deep Blue Sea," and blown it up quite handsomely in De Luxe Color with lovely scenes that stretch all across the enormous screen. But the play and the wordy script, also written by Rattigan, are about emotions; they do not need beautiful shots of skiing in Switzerland or other impressive outdoor activities to tell the sordid story of a Lady who leaves her husband, a distinguished judge, to carry on an adulterous affair with a man who is young and physically attractive but essentially a self-centered bum.

Vivien Leigh plays the Lady with a cool detachment that somewhat belies the great emotional struggle that is going on within her—but at the same time she *looks* frail and sick, like a psychologically disturbed woman who, feeling caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, finds the sea very inviting and turns to suicide. The picture opens with her suicide attempt and then reveals through flashbacks how a mixture of anger, hatred and shame drove her to it. Contrasted with the listless performance of Miss Leigh are the very vivid portrayals of the men: Emlyn Williams as her husband who still loves her and wants her to return, Eric Portman as the helpful but not too reputable doctor who lives upstairs in the middle-class rooming house where Vivien now lives with her lover, Arthur Hill as a friend of both Vivien and the lover and torn between loyalty to both of them, and most of all Kenneth More who gives a flawless performance as the carefree cad who thinks only of himself even when the distraught Vivien is in the depths of despair.

I found I did not care for the movie version of "The Deep Blue Sea" any more than I did for the play. What the theme needs is not pictorial expansion and padding but more depth of treatment and understanding. One thing there is to be said in favor of "The Deep Blue Sea" (and this is a point not often made by movies): it certainly goes out of its way to make adultery unattractive.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

"PLIGHT OF THE INTELLECTUAL"

San Francisco, Cal.

TO the Editors: Normally, the dialogue between magazine-writer and reader should be limited to the former's article and the latter's letter. A dialogue, however, means that the two speak the same language and understand each other while insisting on the validity—even exclusive validity—of their respective points of view. This seems not to have been the case between Mr. Breig and myself [Oct. 14].

"He complains about intellectuals being isolated . . ." begins Mr. Breig. But do I? Indeed not. I do not complain, I state, namely by recognizing certain tensions between modern industrial society and the intellectual, tensions that I consider inevitable. And "inevitable" means that, in fact, neither side can be held directly responsible.

But Mr. Breig insists on detecting responsibilities, for Mr. Breig is an accurate man; this may be seen when he laughs at all the "historical nonsense" that I use (and partly quote). The blame is of course put squarely on the intellectual. No non-sense here, historical or otherwise: the intellectual is non-educational, he writes "in words and phrases which the people cannot be expected to understand, or indeed to bother reading." Off the target again, Mr. Breig: just as I did *not* complain in the first place, I did *not* write for the "people." I wrote for the readers of The Commonweal, and I leave it to you to judge if they fit your category of "people." Moreover, I did not mean to educate; I teach college nine months of the year, may I not write occasionally for fun, or just to express my convictions?

Mr. Breig wants me to educate, but he has strange ideas on education. He must have adhered to the progressive school according to which the student never fails to learn, only the teacher fails to teach him. If, as he states, it is "the business of the man of ideas to find right . . means of getting his ideas to the public," in other words make the public think, why on earth should he couch his ideas in "words and phrases" of which television, radio and the so-called popular magazines give the public a less than healthy fare twenty-four hours a day? Why not use a different style for different ideas? Or shall we perhaps stop publishing great books from Plato to Eliot because the effort spent on understanding them exceeds that of understanding Abbott and Costello? You, Mr. Breig, who accuse me of not loving my fellowmen "flamingly and personally as I ought to," strikingly underestimate your fellowmen's (or fellow Commonweal-readers') capacity for understanding my writing.

And then I come to what you call my cowardice for counseling the intellectual "to stop his ears, etc." Do you think it is cowardice to write a "controversial" article to which one may expect answers like yours? On the contrary: it is rather risky (it has always been) to tell people that they ignore their real needs, and to tell it without mincing words. Chesterton, whom you gratuitously make laugh at me, did the same thing. He criticised, denounced, scorned the indolent, just as Péguy, Claudel and Bernanos did. Some people understood them; most did not. Read Claudel, Mr. Breig, although his "words and phrases" are often rather enigmatic and fail "to reach the people." But he had flame and charity, more perhaps than both of us together.

THOMAS MOLNAR.

"PATRIOTISM AND RELIGION"

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editors: Has my good friend John Cogley overlooked an important point of Thomistic theology in his discussion of religion and patriotism [Oct. 21]?

His series of syllogisms constantly premise that "human virtues" can exist without religious faith. There is no essential link, he asserts, between patriotism and (supernatural) faith. In good old Scholastic form I must distinguish: that human virtues can exist *imperfectly* without supernatural reinforcement, I grant. But that they can exist perfectly as virtues without supernatural aids, I deny.

St. Thomas is completely clear on this: "In the state of fallen nature man is lacking even with regard to the abilities of his nature, so that by his natural strength alone he is powerless to accomplish all the good of the natural order." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, 109, 2). He can accomplish some of the good, but not all. He needs grace and charity for the perfect work.

"There is no essential link between patriotism and faith." Granted. But at the same time there is an existential connection between the two, owing to the infirmities brought on by Original Sin. *De facto,* for the perfect fulfillment of the duties of patriotism, grace and charity are indispensable. We can even say that without grace and charity, patriotism lacks the status of virtue in the strictest sense of the term.

All this, I believe, is unassailable. But why non-religious men should often hit the mark so well in political affairs, while many Catholics fail miserably, is a problem I have not yet completely answered in my own mind.

FRANCIS E. MCMAHON.

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editors: We welcome Mr. Cogley's entrance into the arena of discussion (Oct. 21),

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especially since the philosophic temper of his letter gives hope for clear-cut conclusions. But Mr. Cogley does not seem to have read the *Register's* last editorial reprinted in The Commonweal. There we said: "Essential connection means that both the religious believer and the non-religious are in their nature and in their activity ordinated to God whether they profess that connection or not. Good activity means good by God's standard of the natural law."

We pointed out that it was within the competency of abstract philosophy to make the judgment between good and bad. We went out of our way to state that we were attempting to defend the Ethics of Aristotle. We granted readily that the atheist *de facto* is capable of virtue and grace.

It was obvious, we thought, that we were not speaking of revealed faith and the supernatural. We do not see how we could say more to indicate that we were discussing the problem in the natural order without revealed faith.

After all these attempts to discuss the question in the field of natural religion or ethics, it is a little disconcerting for Mr. Cogley to say that: "The theoretical question in this controversy, then, seems to go this way: Is a man who has not been gifted with supernatural faith capable of the natural virtues which good citizenship demands?"

We are familiar with the thesis that fallen man without grace is not able to observe *all* the precepts of the natural law *for a long time*. There is a correlative thesis that man without the grace of faith is able to perform *some* natural work morally good. So if we were discussing the problem in the field of faith or the supernatural, we would distinguish in Mr. Cogley's syllogisms accordingly.

But we are *not* discussing the problem in the field of faith. We would prefer to discuss the more obvious, the field of natural ethics.

Secularism is a denial of God and God's law in more than one area.

1. The denial of the necessity of faith and the supernatural.
2. The denial of God even in the natural order with the consequent denial of God's natural law.
3. We thank Mr. Cogley for the third: the denial of the value of religion by prostituting it to secular ends.

To insist on the importance of the second area is no mere caviling with words. We have learned that there is very little that is obvious. The second area is worthy of emphasis because attempts have been made by Rationalists to construct government and society on a basis completely divorced from God and God's natural law. That spirit of Rationalism is prevalent in many places in our own time.

We think that Mr. Cogley would grant our thesis in that area for he says: "There is another sense in which every man is 'religious'—that is, all men, whether they acknowledge the fact or not, are by their very nature linked to what the St. Louis Paper calls *God's* Natural Law." That is exactly what we meant when we said in the last editorial: "We have stated the position of natural ethics that man is naturally religious, that his activity tends toward God as to an ultimate end." Could the emphasis on natural religion be more plain? We were asking the Commonweal editorialist to admit that man, naturally religious, has in his civil activity an *essential* connection with God and God's natural law. We have had much difficulty in attempting to obtain that admission. That still is our main objective.

Remember this discussion was caused by The Commonweal stating that a good citizen may be an atheist; a saint may be an anarchist. We appreciate the labor and care of Mr. Cogley's syllogisms. Would he be prepared to prove by a syllogism that an atheist *qua* atheist is a good citizen? An anarchist by definition is opposed to all law and government. Would another syllogism prove that a saint could be an anarchist? The words, atheist and anarchist, have absolute tones. An atheist who denies God denies the obligation of the natural law contained in the Ten Commandments. An anarchist is opposed to all government by law in principle. Would you blame us for thinking that The Commonweal was denying the *essential* connection between 'religion' and patriotism as understood in the second area? Our thesis still is: the denial that man is naturally religious in his being and in his activity because of his *essential* relationship to God and God's natural law is Secularism.

THE EDITORS,
The St. Louis Register.

Baldwin, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I *did* read the *Register* editorial, and it still seemed to me that The Commonweal editorials were talking about one thing, the *Register* editorials about another, and that it was the double use of the word "religious" which clouded the controversy.

I don't think The Commonweal was talking about the natural law when it questioned the commencement-address identification of the religious man with the patriot, on the one hand, and the subversive with the unbeliever, on the other.

Mr. McMahon's quotation from St. Thomas is not something I forgot but something I thought not pertinent to this discussion. The question I attempted to address was, what *logical* reason can a non-believer have for practicing the civic virtues? not whether he needs grace to do so. (There has been no dispute over

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the fact that he does need grace: both parties agree that *de facto* grace is given even to atheists.)

Now for the two syllogisms:

First, let me say I think when The Commonweal said an anarchist might be a saint, it had in mind a person who calls himself an anarchist because he rejects the political power of the State and believes men are capable of obeying the natural law without the coercive power of policemen—as some of our friends in the Catholic Worker do. Personally, the best I think can be said for their position is that it is utopian. But this is not to deny that some of these people have a great love of God—and, incidentally, love of His law.

Therefore:

1. Some persons who call themselves anarchists love God and practice heroic virtue.
2. Persons who love God and practice heroic virtue are saintly.
3. Some anarchists are saintly. (I know several!)

I am not quite sure what "an atheist *qua* atheist is a good citizen" means. Certainly in the Soviet Union an atheist *qua* atheist might make a better citizen than a believer *qua* believer. But here, where citizenship bears no religious test, good citizens are not *qua* anything but *qua* good citizens.

Do I think an atheist can *logically* be a good citizen? Yes.

1. A good citizen is one who obeys the natural law regarding citizenship.
2. An atheist who understands the nature of society and his own nature as a political animal (even though he is blind to his own *religious* nature) may obey the natural law for any number of persuasive immediate, political reasons. (He does not speed on the highways because he believes in a *safe* society; he fights to protect other men's rights because he believes in a *free* society, etc.)
3. An atheist can logically be a good citizen.

Now the *Register* editors may ask: Yes, but what are an atheist's *ultimate* reasons for distinguishing between good and bad, wrong and right? But the question is a contradiction because the atheist *qua* atheist has no ultimate reasons. That makes him a bad philosopher (atheists are!), but I am not at all sure it makes him a bad citizen.

The Thomist will say that man is a political animal because that is the way God made him. The atheist may say he is a political animal because no one made him and that is the way no one made him. Sounds silly to the Thomist—but then atheists always do.

JOHN COGLEY.

BOOKS

Rebirth of the Senses

NED O'GORMAN

DEMOCRACY, encased in the modern industrial state, undergoes a terrible petrifaction when its citizens become lost in the surge of power and the quest for progress. Men lose sight of the splendor of their intelligence, of the uniqueness of their bodies. Human action is blocked by a state that *will* be master, by the machine that *will* direct the mind and determine the development of the body. Industry comes into the community (that part of the state that nourishes life) and transforms the community into an industry, leaving the people confused and stricken with a deadly numbness. The ordinary business of life—the earning of daily bread and the pursuit of happiness—is folded into the politics of the perpetuation of the state. All passion is spent, all desire is committed to survival, and man loses his contact with himself, loses that "grass root" feeling of gladness and creativity that determines the life of a generation.

In *The Grass Roots of Art** Herbert Read's thesis, and it is a basic one, is that the state must educate, must revivify the "industrial man." Mr. Read is not primarily concerned with education of a political kind; his thoughts turn, rather, to education which demands a sensual rebirth, a capturing again of the tactile experience of manhood. A breach between man and his physical world yields more chaos, he would say, than any depression, any conspiracy. Political unions mean nothing if the citizens gathered together are unable to realize the "experience" of the world. More than anything else industry has taught man to lose faith in the power of his own physical reality; the machine has overwhelmed the body by its poise, force, and indestructibility, and has forced the mind to question its own genius in the face of another genius so perfect and relentless.

***The Grass Roots of Art. By Herbert Read. George Wittenborn, Inc. $2.50.**

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Where must re-education begin? How does one begin to bring men back to themselves? I think one can answer by restating the problem: when men have lost the childhood contact with nature, they turn easily into robots, and slavery becomes only a question of time; when men lose the "feel" of the mountains, the "touch" of "wood," the vision of the sky, a sadness sets in that is never dispelled. Mr. Read is writing about the nature of man, a theme so ordinary that it is often ignored, and he emphasizes what St. Thomas taught to the West when he defined man as a creature of sensibility, not a creature erotic and shamefully angelic. Man lives his life, as D. H. Lawrence puts it, "inside his own skin" and approaches God, man, and happiness through his own skin. Unless the physical life is real the spirit breaks.

MEN today are reduced to the position of watchers. The drama of their world goes on before them and they cannot leap into the flux and energy of life. Tyranny is most awful when it is embodied in a force that keeps men divided from the world and from themselves. To combat this unnatural disunion Read pleads for a revolution in modern education theory:

> the fingers must feel the clay, the crisp substance of the wood, the tension of the molten metal; there must be a sensuous contact of hand and eye with the grain and grit. Otherwise we have made a divorce between man's senses and man's artifices which has never existed before in history and from which consequences will flow of a quite unpredictable nature.

These "consequences" of "unpredictable nature" are, I am sure, generations of insensible and cruel men who will turn to violence and destruction to relieve the anxiety of their limbs and the emptiness of their hearts. It is never easy to assent to the whole of reality. We cannot watch the cock-fight and leave the blood lust in the parlor. Unless men are taught to live as men—and this "living" means the body as well as the soul—the skills of the hands and the acuteness of the eyes, as well as the "skills" of prayer and worship, will grow cold, and manhood will be defined by the violence of the knife, not by the gentleness of the heart. "The basis of intelligence is a lively sensibility: *nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit prius in sensu.*" The "atrophy of sensibility" means the loss of reason, and reason lost is seldom regained.

THE hope of mankind is revolution, when things will turn from war to peace, from enslavement to liberation, from hate to love, from violence to charity. In Mr. Read's words, the "centralization of Art has divided the creative aspect of life from the *quotidian,*" and art for Mr. Read is the skill that flows from the "integration of the senses." Men must learn again to value the "laws of harmony and proportion, of balance and rhythm." Men must live the "eighth day of creation" when they were sent out to do the task of men. But in this age, the task of men, the full use of all their powers to *make* the world glorious, is taken over lock, stock and barrel, by the parent state that refuses its children freedom of growth by denying them the experience of their childhood "apprenticeship to nature." It is interesting to note here that, at a seminar in heart surgery held at the medical school of the University of Vermont, a specialist insisted that heart disease was caused by too much "lazy" leisure. The heart, he said, became unable to fight any illness because it had built up no defense in a long life of inactivity. So with the human personality. A civilization where employment is in proportion to the efficiency of the machine, where men know in their hearts that they have "caused" nothing to come into being, can give nothing to men but the assurance of the helplessness of human nature.

Mr. Read would have children taught skills of the mind through the training of the senses; he would have the adult community active in regional theatres and through a wide distribution of wealth he would abolish the "qualitative aspect of production" and force industry to turn out objects of beauty and usefulness.

The revolution of the sensibilities is the only revolution that matters. When one recalls the revolutions of the past, one recalls the slaughter house. Men cannot be changed from without; they must cause their own change. And change is the turning of the heart from the darkness outside to the light within; it is the affirmation that what truly matters is man, not things; his true happiness the thing to work toward, and his brutalization the thing to fight against. Mr. Read does not plead for a public bath and ball court in every village. What he does plead for and what must in time come to pass is the rebirth of a feeling for the universe, a sort of metaphysical intuition into the senses and the regaining of the power to create out of one's own self the majesty of living. At the conclusion of the second lecture Read writes: "Frustrated and brutalized, we drift between the boredom of peace and the self-inflicted wounds of war, and dismiss as lunatic those few quiet voices that speak of love and beauty and of the renunciations we must accept, of power, wealth and pride, if we would have the influence of beauty and love prevail in our lives."

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Life and the Dream

MARJORIE MORNINGSTAR. By Herman Wouk. Doubleday. $4.95.

By R. T. HORCHLER

MR. Wouk's designation of *Marjorie Morningstar* as a love story and an entertainment is, deliberately or not, quite misleading. Marjorie is more than simply "a modern girl in love," and the story of her life is less a romance than a strenuously didactic moral and sociological study. The area of Mr. Wouk's concern is wide, but he is intent particularly on these problems: the rootlessness of the "Jew" who has severed his connections with Jewish culture and Jewish religion, the clash between bourgeois and "liberal" ethics, between traditionalism and progressivism, between the concepts of self-abnegation and egoism, perhaps of humility and pride.

Banal, unreal, faintly pathetic, Marjorie Morgenstern's self-chosen stage name, which titles the book, is wonderfully appropriate for her. Her conception of reality and her aspirations for herself are also banal, unreal and pathetic. Different from any other adolescent college girl only in being very beautiful and economically able to indulge her romantic imagination, Marjorie conceives that she is an extraordinary person, a great actress and a woman of the world. She is mistaken, of course. When she finds her place in life at last, it is as the epitome of ordinariness—in the conventional role of housewife, mother and suburban clubwoman.

The adventures which befall Marjorie in her search for personal fulfillment, mostly amatory adventures, make no deep impression on her. She is tiresomely imperceptive and a painfully slow learner. At the novel's end she has muddled through to a happy establishment as Westchester wife and mother, but all her decisions have been made by instinct and accident, and she knows very little more about the world than she did when she was seventeen.

It would seem that Marjorie Morgenstern is an unworthy subject for the novelist, but the apparent unworthiness of his heroine is, I believe, precisely Mr. Wouk's great point. Marjorie is equipped for life with no great intelligence, no great sensitivity, no great force of character. All that she has comes from her family—orthodox, clannish, full of simple folk shrewdness and wisdom—and these gifts are an instinctive moral sense, a non-rational regard for religion and tradition, unthinking faith in the dignity and worth of human life, and simple good will.

As she blunders through her life, Marjorie confronts varied and fascinating aspects of our social order: the tiny Bronx world within a world of Jewish immigrants and their children, Central Park West with its new-rich and climbers, the Jews who have stopped being Jews, the sophisticates and pseudo-intellectuals of the theatre, and Bohemia at large. And in every encounter, every crisis, we see the solidity and worth of the stubbornly conventional bourgeois ethic and, by contrast, the weakness, self-indulgence, fraudulence of pseudo-intellectual iconoclasm. (For Mr. Wouk, all intellectuals seem to be pseudo.) Thus even poor silly Marjorie is worth a dozen of the scoffers and talkers.

The types who inhabit the various worlds in which Marjorie moves are knowingly and amusingly drawn, and the substance of these worlds is firmly fixed in sights and sounds and smells which communicate tangible reality. The bar-mitzvah, (catered by Lowenstein, with the thousand-dollar, next-to-the-best *kiddush*), and the family *seder* are masterpieces of realistic art.

Unfortunately, however, Mr. Wouk seems to have fallen in love with his heroine. As the novel progresses, we spend more and more time in the wastes of Marjorie's girlish imagination, and Marjorie is increasingly removed from the cultural context which provides her with symbolic value. Mr. Wouk puts irony aside and regards Marjorie's problems with a solemnity and romantic softness to match her own.

Concerning the thesis of the novel, we must be content with the Scottish verdict of "not proven." Mr. Wouk has come to grips with serious moral and cultural questions, which he presents with knowledge and dramatic force, but not quite fairly and not in any great depth. The spokesmen for the enemy are rather too palpably made of straw, and the resolutions to the problems are much too easy. Further, one suspects that the ending of the book—Marjorie snug, serene and unthinking in suburbia—achieves a more serious ambiguity than the author intended.

Marjorie Morningstar is a big book, rich in minor treasures, and to be respected for the scope and seriousness of its intention, but it promises much more than it delivers. To our great disappointment, it degenerates into slick fiction—too glib, too facile, too stickily romantic. In Mr. Wouk's war with the (pseudo-)intellectuals, *Marjorie Morningstar* amounts to an inconclusive skirmish.

Molesworth Rides Again

HOW TO BE TOPP. By Geoffrey Willans and Ronald Searle. Vanguard Press. $2.50.

By JOHN P. SISK

PERHAPS for American readers the best introduction to this Willans and Searle sequel to *Down with Skool* would be Orwell's "Such, Such Were the Joys . . ." or Waugh's *Decline and Fall*. These two portraits of the English public school throw the right kind of lighting on the setting in which Nigel Molesworth rides again.

For those not already familiar with Nigel, "the curse of st custard's," he is an irreverent and anarchic adolescent of uncertain age who fits into the human picture

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somewhere between Dennis the Menace and Attila the Hun. The object of his displeasure is civilization itself, or as much of it as his confinement to St. Custard's allows him to get at. Appropriately, therefore, his attack is in the manner of Dada, and it is very funny.

How to Be Topp is Nigel's sardonic attempt to "give my fellow sufferers the fruits of my experience." It includes instructions on how to write letters home ("on the whole no good comes of them"); information on outer space ("you can jump three times as high as you can on earth but so can everyone else so there is not much fun in it"); as well as advice on how to be topp in English ("chiefly a matter of marksmanship"), French ("weedy") and Latin ("do the grate british nation understand that thousands of its young elizabethans are looking at latin ugh before there brekfast hav been settled?"). In his prodigality Nigel also includes a day-dream service and a procedure for not succeeding at cricket.

Such a work is not to be compared with those basically good-natured and nostalgic pictures of schoolboy shenanigans with which readers in this country are familiar. Here the affinities are with *Gulliver's Travels, Brave New World, 1984,* and *The Loved One*: the underlying conviction is that the Visigoths are breaking over the ramparts. *How to Be Topp* projects in witty disguise a sense of modern man's potentialities for nihilistic destruction. It is a book for adults, not children, for ultimately it is about the adult world.

But it works through insights into the adolescent mind: through an understanding of that mind's encyclopedic though superficial range, the hellzapoppin-like organization of this vast material and the hyperbolic exuberance of its fantasies. This, for instance, is Nigel taking mental flight from his French class:

> His mouth open his plate fall out doodlebugs fall from his hair he rev the engines up and take off into the ether for another daydream.

or crouching tensed with cricket bat, waiting for the bowler to, as we would say, burn one over:

> Fast blower retreat with ball muttering and cursing. He stamp on the grass with his grate hary feet he beat his chest and give grate cry. Then with a trumpet of rage he charge towards you. Quake quake ground tremble birdseed fly in all directions if only you can run away but it is not done.

This comic technique, worked to the point of triteness in the animated cartoon, Willans and Searle make wonderfully exhilarating.

Searle's drawings are too intimately a part of the book to be called its illustrations. To Americans this superb artist is likely to be the more familiar of the two authors, either through his cartoons in *Punch* or through such collections as *Hurrah for St. Trinian's* and *Souls in Torment.* It is in these books that the terrible girls of St. Trinian's appear. *How to Be Topp* makes it clear that Searle's decision to extinguish them in an atomic explosion was prompted by a ruthless virtue. For if they had lived to mate with their most likely husbands, the boys of St. Custard's, the situation for everyone else could be, in Nigel's words, "thoroughly wet and weedy."

Song and Sanctity

CYCLE FOR MOTHER CABRINI. Poems by John Logan. The Grove Press. $3.50.

By JOHN FANDEL

SEVERAL years ago a single poem in *America* startled my enthusiasm for a then unknown but fine poet, John Logan, a quiet newcomer among contemporary poets. Shortly after, other poems (in *Partisan, Poetry* and The Commonweal) confirmed that first awareness: here was a poet gladly watched for. Here was a poet not easily forgotten, nor easily acknowledged. Horace Gregory wrote an early and acute comment in the *Saturday Review.* As I remember his words now, they greeted John Logan as one of the better recent poets writing in America. Nor was Horace Gregory spinning phrases from a critical euphoria; extravagance is hardly a quality of contemporary critics. Then, last spring, I heard about the forthcoming publication of *Cycle for Mother Cabrini.* I waited for it gladly. It is worth waiting for.

This thin volume has weight. Ten poems, most of them long, create the adjectives: vigorous, keen, refreshing, neat. They also define the term "lyrical." For John Logan uses language not only as an examination of precise meanings; he uses words as a means of precise song. So many of these poems, as they move strictly in a kind of speech that is essentially declarative, and delicately scientific in the drama of statement, rise to nice, almost unexpected, crescendoes of lyricism; so that although the reader is occasionally slowed down by tensely

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packed moments of grammar as in these lines,

> Without lustre hair
> Sprouts at arm's root bitter
> Sediment upon the flesh dead
> The nail slides from folded
> Skin,

he is exhilarated by equally intentional high points of realizations as,

> the spring soul
> That bursts quiet as a violet
> And swings upon its thin
>
> Stem to flame at the sun.

These lines, by the way, are a brief contemplation upon all the poems. The short, almost clipped, lines of the poems are stemlike in their stanzaic patterns. The images flower: they do flame.

The tension between the brilliant imagistic verses and the knottier ones, those passages more grammatically elliptical and "hard," accounts for the fantastic achievement of *John Logan, if I have read him* as correctly as I have zealously. The former prevent dull obscurity, the latter check mimsy prettiness. Together, they represent the two continual characteristics of spoken language. And they are married by the usual, the nearly commonplace, usage of words that is, after all, the necessary element of speech. Sometimes the verses have a slight exercise quality; but isn't this, really, of the nature of language itself? John Logan is quoted as being interested in poetry "more as an exercise in the language than in its structure." This explains his colloquial ecstasy; it also explains the firm structure of the poetry: he did not say he was not—nor does he write as one who is not—interested in structure:

> I speak thus
> For flesh is my failing:
>
> That it shall fall is my
> Salvation. That it shall not
> Conquer is my blind hope.
> That it shall rise again
>
> Commanding, is my fear.
> That it shall rise changed
> Is my faith.

And, from memorable *Pagan Saturday:*

> Letting
> The fire at one side turn
> To ash we buried our yellow
> Catch inside its wraps of husk
> And later, ate in heights
>
> Of joy the cindered ears.
> And racing along the rim
> Of Indian Gully sudden
> As fear light as laughter I felt
> A creature flare with beauty
>
> At the back of my eye.

Colloquial ecstasy is perhaps a clumsy way of putting it. This speech is not flabbily inconsequential; it is homiletic. The poet has serious things to say. He speaks his devotion so kindly in the most accurate unblurb-like analysis of his own practice, that readers will not be disappointed in finding the poems a gospel of their own intention: "They are concerned with the Saints as heroes of the will and lovers, as incredibles. They treat myth,

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rememberings of childhood and anticipations of death as acts of spirit —good, bad or trimming. They reintroduce the superstitions of ghosts and the lonely fallacy of the lack of a natural place for man. These poems try to disprove materialism by coming into existence; and that is the extent of their apostolate." His ten apostles, these poems, are humble-tongued enough to have many listeners and so kaleidoscopically ranged they ought to have a universal public. It is challenging for me to read *A Dialogue With La Mettrie,* and exciting to read a poem on Southwell (I know of no other published poem on this neglected genius) when Crashaw, Hopkins and Thompson are so frequently remembered—exciting, not only because John Logan admires more about Southwell than Ben Jonson did, but also because Southwell, to our age of priest-martyrdom and poetry, is so fine a symbol. For this alone I should be happy to praise John Logan's profundity. Were he without it, I should still be glad to be one of his audience.

The Joy, Power and Beauty

A ROCKING-HORSE CATHOLIC. By Caryll Houselander. Sheed & Ward. $2.50.

By DORIS GRUMBACH

I MUST confess at once to a total inability to be objective about anything written by the late Caryll Houselander. Her simplicity, the abnormal purity of her prose, the delight she felt in "the joy, the power and the beauty of God"—these things make me, as I read, more her partner than her judge.

One learns in this book, Miss Houselander's autobiography, that her early life was compounded of Gothic terror, mistrust of the outside world, consuming inner hatreds. She was a weak, sickly, unattractive child, whose illnesses made an effective barrier between her and required studies, between her and her classmates, between her pride and their occasional attempts at friendship. Her religious training was little help: her mother seems to have become a Catholic on impulse and at once had Caryll, aged six, follow her into the Church, after which she was subjected to an over-zealous "persecution of piety."

Her adolescence was haunted by one move after another. She became thoroughly puzzled and confused by the shifting emphases and values between a French convent full of piety and poverty, and then an English one where social standing was of primary importance. Her breakdowns and retreats became more frequent and disturbing; she found nothing to say to her schoolmates, no interest in learning what schools had to teach. Nonconformist and rebel, she must have seemed strange and exotic to her untroubled companions.

Then, too, Fate had a perverse way of taking even the ordinary ingredients of her life and bending them into unrecognizable shapes. Into their home her mother took a strange, ill, outcast priest, who

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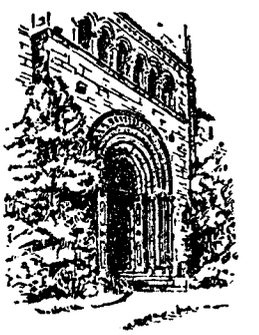

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began at once to dictate the terms of Caryll's life. This occasion for scandal caused some sort of nameless crisis; she left home and began a pitiful life of hunger and inhuman work, friendlessness, loneliness. She roamed the streets of London by night. By day she worked at many different jobs. And always she searched in strange places, in ancient temples and rebel religions, for the faith she had somehow misplaced in those confused, unhappy years of cultivated hatreds.

What Miss Houselander found at last is in her last paragraph: "For me, the greatest joy in being once again in full communion with the Catholic Church has been, and is now, the ever-growing reassurance given by the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ, with its teaching that *we* are the Church, and that 'Christ and His Church are one'—and that *because* Christ and His Church are one, the world's sorrow, with which I have always been obsessed . . . is only the shadow cast by the spread arms of the crucified King to shelter us until the morning of resurrection from the blaze of everlasting love."

REVIEWERS

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